



MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY

Giving thanks for families

Tuesday, November 21, 2006

- The goal of Michigan's Adoption Services Program is to place children in adoption as quickly as possible following termination of parental rights.
- Whenever possible, adoptive placements are made with families that already have an existing relationship or attachment to the child (relatives and foster parents), and every effort is made to keep siblings together.

Adoption Statistics

- 2,883 children were adopted through Department of Human Services' offices and private adoption agencies between October 1, 2004 and September 30, 2005.
- A relative or foster parent adopted 92 percent of those children.
- 80 percent of children who had siblings in foster care were adopted with at least one of their siblings.
- Preliminary data for FY 2006 indicates that approximately 2,550 children were placed into adoptive homes out of the foster care system between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006.
- Today there are approximately 6,200 children in the foster care system whose parents' rights have been terminated.
- For approximately 4,500 of those children, the goal is adoption. The remaining children are either older youths who are satisfied with their placement and do not wish to be adopted (those 14 years of age and older have that option) or youths in other living arrangements where adoption is not appropriate.
- Last year, 44 courts participated in Adoption Day 2005, most by finalizing adoptions, but others by holding "adoption fairs" and other events aimed at educating the public about the adoption process. More than 270 children had their adoptions finalized on that date.
- **During the four year period that Michigan has celebrated Adoption Day, over 10,600 children have been placed into adoptive homes out of foster care!**

How it works

- The Department of Human Services' Adoption Services Program provides services to children whose parental rights have been terminated due to child abuse or neglect and to families who want to adopt.
- Services are provided either directly by local DHS office adoption staff or through adoption purchase of service contracts with approximately 50 private Michigan child-placing agencies.
- The DHS Adoption Services Division is responsible for adoption, adoption contract management, the adoption subsidy and medical subsidy programs, Central Adoption Registry and the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI).

Adoption Assistance

- Many children who are available for adoption qualify for adoption assistance to help families with some of the costs of bringing children into their homes through adoption. Adoption assistance may consist of support subsidy (financial support), medical subsidy (payment for certain remedial services) and assistance with the administrative costs of processing and adoption.
- While not all children are eligible for adoption assistance, for eligible children, adoption assistance may continue to be available until the child turns 18 years of age.
- Over 25,000 adopted children are eligible for ongoing support subsidy.
- Children receiving adoption assistance generally have special circumstances that make finding an appropriate adoptive home more challenging – they may be older children, members of a racial or ethnic minority, part of a sibling group, or have physical, mental or emotional impairments.
- The total amount of adoption support subsidy paid to adoptive families by the state of Michigan is approximately \$208 million annually.

Adoption Challenges

- Children who are available for adoption are permanent state wards that cannot return to their birth homes.
- These children often have social or psychological needs as a result of being victims of abuse and neglect. They may be emotionally guarded and apprehensive about accepting placement in an adoptive home.
- Children may be older and/or have siblings with whom they should be adopted or maintain contact.
- Families wishing to adopt children from the foster care system need to be willing and ready to face the challenges – and the considerable rewards – of providing permanency in a nurturing environment.

For more information

- For more information on **children awaiting adoption in Michigan** go to www.mare.org
- For more information on **children awaiting adoption in the U.S.** go to www.adoptUSkids.org
- For more information on **public adoption policies and data** go to www.michigan.gov/dhs and click on “Adoption”